How Miss "Sherlock Holmes" Re-Abducted Girl-Captive From Chinatown

FROM "girl of the golden west," horsewoman, two-gun girl and sprite of the rolling plains, to woman detective, with the slinking human wolf instead of the equally slinking coyote as her prey, is the transition through which Miss Mabel Connelly passed in a few years and all as a result of mere accident.

Miss Connelly, bane of the crooks' existence in a score of cities, and terror of the unscrupulous medical practitioner, frankly admits to thirty years, but she doesn't look it. Nine years in crowded cities, stalking criminals in ballrooms and in dark, awesome alleys have not served to mar the freshness that was the gift of twenty-one years spent in the warm sunlight by day and under the starlit blue of the quiet western nights.

"Sometimes I long to go back to the west—to Texas, where I was born—but the west, with its panorama of sage-grown prairie, is a page from the picture book of childhood," says Miss Connelly. "Sometimes I like to turn in memory to the frayed pages of the old life, and I do. But I cannot go back. My bread and butter is in the crowded city, where life is mean and dry and warped, where the friends are not the kind who will ride a hundred miles under a scorching sun just to ask you how you feel, and where, on the sultry summer nights, one sits in a stuffy room luxuriating in the artificial breeze of an electric fan. It's comfortable, of course, but it isn't like the good old wind that has the whole prairie to get started in."

Miss Mabel Connell

When Miss Connelly was twenty, the nine-months-old child of a friend of hers disappeared with a suddenness that indicated activity of kidnapers. Police of the town in which the young woman then lived were unable to get any trace of the child or its abductors, and the young mother, despairing of seeing her baby again, visited Miss Connelly nightly and wept and sobbed out her grief. A year passed, and as nothing more was heard of the child, the young mother gave up all hope, mourned her child as dead, and slowly pined away.

"Something told me, though, that the baby was not dead," said Miss Connelly in telling how the kidnaping changed her whole career. "One evening, following a visit from the mother, I conceived the notion of going myself in search of the baby. The trail was a year old, but in the end I picked it up, and, having plenty of money, followed it wherever it led. And it took me over a great part of the county. It ended in Cleveland, in an old, dilapidated house on Woodland ave. The father of the child, who had separated from the mother, I learned, had hired the kidnapers, and when their part of the job was accomplished, placed the child to board with a negress, in whose care it still was when I found it.

"Because I was an amateur, I suppose, I adopted a disguise before going to the Cleeland house. It was the only time I ever tried to throw off suspicion by employing a disguise. Anyhow, I made up as a book agent, went to the house and gained admittance. While I sat talking to the negress a baby started to cry in another room, and she arose, went out of the room and returned with a white baby. Thinking the presence of a white child in the house would arouse my curiosity, the woman explained a neighbor had left it with her while she went to market. I went on talking as though it was a matter that did not concern me, but presently, when the negress was as nearly off her guard as I could hope for, I snatched the baby from her and made a dash for the street.

"The negro woman seized me just as I reached the door, but I succeeded in throwing her off and climbed aboard a street car bound for the Public Square. That same day I wired my friend that I had found her child, and I took the train for home that night. My success, which really was due to an accident more than anything else, decided me on taking up the detective business as a means of earning a livelihood."

Miss Connelly, since going out into the world as a feminine Sherlock Holmes, has worked on thousands of cases, some trivial and some of considerable importance. She has trailed petty thieves, embezzlers, business pirates, Chinese opium peddlers, jail breakers, dynamiters, kidnapers, shoplifters and crooks of all classes and both sexes. Of course she has had failures, as everyone must have, but in the great majority of cases she has "written her name."

She has done special work for the government, and for state organizations. She is the terror of illegal dental and medical practitioners, and recently, having been employed by the state dental board to run down dentists practicing without a license, she obtained no less than six convictions in one week. In each instance her evidence was complete.

In her fight against the illegal dentists, Miss Connelly, who has a perfect set of teeth, was compelled to employ a young girl to act as a sort of Dr. Watson. This young girl, who sacrificed a perfectly sound tooth in order that Miss Connelly might gain the desired evidence, had the same molar drilled and "treated" no less than forty times by as many different dentists. Miss Connelly, accompanying her as her "friend," would look around for diploma or license, and finding none, would swear to a warrant and cause the practitioner's arrest. She worked the same scheme in her fight against physicians practicing without legal right, and she never failed once to get a conviction.

In working different classes of cases, it has been necessary for Miss Connelly to be a cloak model (she's a "perfect 36," incidentally), saleswoman, stenographer, society woman and a score of other characters in which, however, she made no attempt to disguise her features. One of the most difficult parts the woman Sherlock Holmes ever was called on to play was that of a member of New York's slums in an effort to gain possession of a fifteen-year-old girl kept prisoner in a Chinese headquarters in Pell st.

"If there is one wily crook," says Miss Connelly, "it is the Chinese criminal. And in the majority of cases his crime is one that is directed against young girls. In the New York case I was called to rescue a girl who, having been drugged in a Pell st. restaurant, was made captive by a Chinese who had become infatuated with her, and was held a prisoner in a basement room.

"I traced the girl to the restaurant and tackled the case first by questioning Chinese in nearby buildings. I soon learned that getting information out of a celestial is much like trying to sail across the ocean in a tub.

"I proceeded along more scientific lines, dressed myself in a faded, ragged dress and, without otherwise changing my appearance, took to frequenting all Chinese places in the street. One day a Chinese who had grown so used to seeing me that he nodded to me every time I passed his place, called me in and asked me if I wanted a job in his restaurant. I said I did. He put me to peeling potatoes, and on the third day he told me why he had hired me. He said a girl who worked in another restaurant, and who had been peeling potatoes and other vegetables for all of the eating places in the Chinese district, had been taken sick. I asked him who the girl was and he told me she 'Wang Chang's girl.' Wang Chang was the man suspected of keeping the missing girl prisoner. I made up my mind to search Wang Chang's place immediately. I didn't know just how I should do it, and set about devising some means of getting into the basement of Wang's restaurant. I finally hit on an idea. I asked my employer how he would write his name in Chinese. He made a lot of crazy-looking scrawls on a piece of wrapping paper, and when he wasn't looking I slipped it into my pocket.

"That afternoon I went over to Wang Chang, thrust the paper into his hand and said I had been sent after a little keg of dried fish. I knew it was customary to keep them in cellars.

"When the unsuspecting Wang Chang made his way to the rear of the kitchen, down a flight of steps and through the dark basement, I followed. I saw him stop before a door in a partition which divided the cellar practically in half, listen for a moment, and then open the door and look in. He did not know I was behind him, and he was taken completely off his guard when I thrust a revolver against his ribs and told him to keep quiet. My suspicion that the girl was in the basement was correct. She arose from a bed of discarded garments when she saw me, and I told her to go up stairs and run to the street. I was not concerned about arresting the Chinese, because the parents of the girl, dreading notoriety, did not want the man turned over to the police. I backed up the stairs, ran through the restaurant and, on reaching the street, found the girl waiting for me. I took her to her home and got my reward the next day."

Miss Connelly has been called on frequently to bring guns into play. Raised on the plains and instructed by her father in the use of firearms, she handles a revolver with as much ease and certainty as the average woman manipulates a powder puff. She is quick on the "draw" and also is well instructed in the art of quickly disarming an antagonist.

"The life of a woman detective is sufficiently filled with thrills to prevent her from growing bored through monotony," says Miss Connelly, "but, everything considered, it is not the proper vocation for a woman. I cling to it because I probably can make a better living this way than at anything else requiring equal effort.

"There are times, however, when I get terribly lonely. I have not time in any one city to make friends. Besides, I have grown to mistrust most women, not because all merit distrust, but because most of those with whom I have come in contact are not worthy of trust.

"Experience has taught me, too, that the woman criminal is cleverer than her masculine competitor. Necessity requires that she attain a higher degree of perfection. She cannot go without question into as many places as a man can go. She hasn't such a naturally broad field of activity. A woman always attracts more attention anywhere than does a man, especially if she possesses physical attractiveness.

"And because a woman, if criminally inclined, becomes more perfect in her profession, it's more difficult to return her. Once a woman takes up a criminal career it is almost certain she will never be anything but a crook. Perhaps, too, [illegible]

The ECHO from PARADISE FLAT

Contest Over Myrtle Reed's Will Recalls Tragedy in Life of Author

THE Lord of Life, whom she came afterward to know as a tyrant, smiled as she lay in her cradle.

"She shall have the Supreme Gift" he promised, and her Guardian Angel lifted its head. He talked on:

"She shall have beauty elusive as the colors of a sea-shell, poignant as moonlight, fine as a steel blade!"

"That is not the Supreme Gift," said the Angel.

"Then love, like a golden flame, lighting all her years!"

Still the Angel objected. "The love that Life offers is a transitory gift."

"Ah! I shall bestow on her the power to feel. It is my gift to the soul!"

"And God shall supplement it with the joy—and pain—of expression," whispered the Angel, dropping a tear, like the shadow of silver, on her tiny face.

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SHE never was pretty. The children she played with grew daintily, and were exhibited with pride by relatives and friends. She of them all was never pointed out on the playground nor in the schoolroom. She was not exactly ugly; she was just heavy. Her face was too full and too large and the features too indefinitely defined, as though the Master Sculptor had wearied of his work before it was finished. Her skin was cloudy; she had too much saffron hair. She was too pudgy; too heavy of ankles and wrists. Her lips drooped too much. Moreover, she was inarticulate. But her voice was wonderful, and there was light in her eyes.

When she grew into young womanhood the heavy lines softened. She still lacked coloring, but the light of her eyes flooded personality and illumined the lives of those about her. And her friends, who adored her, said "How joyously she lives!"

Finally love came to her. And then she began to write.

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"TODAY," she wrote, "the rain is beating against the windows. Sometimes it is a slow monotone, like the responses of the litany, and then it changes to a rush like the moving of unnumbered wings.

"The Spirit of the Rain is a veritable bird of passage, closely following the flocks of wild geese in her arrival and departure. And her moods are as various as your own.

"When the earth awakes from the long sleep, she shares the delirious raptures of spring. There is nothing more joyous than an April shower—nothing more cheerless than November rain.

"When the blood of the clover riots in the veins of June she dances wildly through the world. Her silver wings flash through the mist in the meadow, the thirsty grass drinks deep of her liquid enchantment, and the shimmering coolness of her dusky hair, floating over the fields, puts courage into the faint heart of every drooping rose.

"Her light feet twinkle upon the forest floor to the castanets of dripping leaves, she swings with lyrical grace from side to side of the wood, and to the brave little mother-birds, shielding their downy nestlings from wind and flood, she whispers, 'Be not afraid.'

"Fern and moss and lichen all wait for her coming, and the little creatures of the woods, from sheltered nooks, watch her mad course from wide, wondering eyes.

"She casts her crystal witchery over a weary brook and it straightway sings again, forgetting all its toilsome way through parched and dusty plains. There is another life in her touch and she so fills the air with magic that it needs but a shaft of sunset light to lay a rainbow in every field.

"Sometimes her departure is slow and stately, but more often there is a sudden gleam of silver in the shadow and lo, she is gone!

"Today I have given her a message for you. Even as I write she is turning her changeful face to the east, and I fancy that she will be with you by nightfall.

"And so when you light the lamps at twilight, dreaming perhaps of the one who cannot come, soft finger-tips will sound at your window pane. When you look out into the dark you will see her laughing, tender eyes, and by the grace of loving, you will understand the word that has come to you—on the wings of the Spirit of the Rain."

—From "Love Letters of a Musician."

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MYRTLE REED married James Sydney McCullough in 1906 and their life began in her famous "Paradise Fat" on Kenmore ave., Chicago. She was radiantly happy. Her happiness overflowed in verse and story. She idealized her husband in "Lavender and Old Lace," "The Master's Violin" "Spinner in the Sun" "Weaver of Dreams' and "Flower of the Dusk."

Perhaps she loved him too much. Or perhaps McCullough tired of the temperamental idiosyncrasies of an author. Anyway he began to develop erraticisms, disillusion cutting through the woof of joy. She put her grief into her stories. She wrote, "The Lord of Life said 'the rooms are full in the House of the Broken Heart, but no one sees another here. Each one is absorbed in his own grief to the exclusion of all else.'"

And when Rosemary, the little heroine of "The Master of the Vineyard" asked for Love, the Lord of Life answered her thus:

"Love in itself is not joy. It is always service and it may be sacrificed; it means giving, not receiving; asking, not answer!"

She grew a little bitter, too, finally:

"When you are more miserable without a man than you think you ever could be with him, it's time to marry him; and when you are more miserable with him than you think you ever can be without him, it's time to quit."

"You can tell by the way a man kisses you whether he cares or not. If he doesn't kiss you at all, he doesn't care and doesn't even mind your knowing it. If he kisses you dutifully, without a trace of feeling and by preference on your cheek or neck, he doesn't care but thinks he ought to, and hopes you won't find out that he doesn't. But if he cares—ah, how it [illegible]

The Late Myrtle Reed.

Mrs. Hiram V. Reed

Hiram Reed.

terhouse steak establishment on [illegible] dutton stew allowance."

"Men—the married ones—are the greatest gold brick artists in the world; their wives are the easy marks."

"Woman is still a cave dweller, while her husband roams the highways of the world."

And then there was the twelfth anniversary of her meeting with her husband when he was to return to her early in the evening with roses. She helped prepare the holiday dinner and wore the gown he liked best. But he didn't come. She sat by the window and listened to every echoing footstep. Early in the morning he opened the door unsteadily, and greeted her with shifting eyes. So many times she had heard his footstep fall unsteadily and had turned, heartsick, from his flushed face!

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ON the Last Night he was in Milwaukee he had gone away early in the morning without telling her farewell. The maid who had been kind to her was spending the evening outside. She was alone, with her unhappiness, in Paradise Flat.

She lighted the shaded study lamp and opened her desk. Slowly she ran a sheet of note paper through the typewriter. Her fingers worked woodenly; it was as though she were so heavy with sorrow as to be inert under the weight.

She addressed the letter to her mother. It ended in broken hearted pleading: "Oh mother, I've loved so much, I've tried so hard, I've worked so hard, and I've failed, failed, failed. Forgive me, please."

When she had sealed the letter she closed the desk with lingering tenderness and turned out the light. Afterward she walked through the rooms, caressing things, pausing long before her husband's picture. It was quite late when she went on into her own room and prepared for sleep.

On the dressing table was the drug that mercifully soothed her when unhappiness drove slumber away. She unfolded one of the wrappings, and the dust—five grains of tiny white crystals—caught the [illegible]

struck the half hour before she was drowsy. In another half hour her temples and wrists were burning. Then stealthily, infinitely slowly, languor, soft footed as dreams, stole to her side and laid velvet fingers on her heart. The air seemed strangely heavy, impotent.

The mists—were they the clouds of dawn?—were not so light as she. Quite easily she could rise on them; rise and drift away; drift farther and farther into the rose mists shot with silver.

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FOUR years later was begun a court contest over Myrtle Reed's will. Her father and mother, to whom she left most of her $125,000 estate, asked to have McCullough deposed as trustee. The action, now pending in the Chicago courts, has resulted only in an order that McCullough report on the property and furnish heavy bond.

And there remain to him, meanwhile, the little love sayings of the woman who loved him:

"The most precious things in the world are those which cannot be bought—the tender touch of a little child's fingers, the light in a woman's eyes, and the love in a woman's heart."

"When once a woman's eyes, with understanding love, have looked into the very depths of a man's soul, he need seek no farther for the Philosopher's Stone."

"The love of the many comes [illegible] love of the one; one flash [illegible] light makes the whole [illegible] chord of Love's music [illegible] to song, and one touch [illegible] glorifies the earth [illegible] alchemy to make [illegible]